

SERVICE EMPLOYEES IN SOUTHEAST REGION HONORED IN CEREMONY THANKING HURRICANE EMERGENCY WORKERS

Recently, Service employees representing teams from the Southeast Region involved in rescue and recovery efforts during hurricanes Katrina and Rita were honored in a ceremony by Interior Secretary Gale Norton.

"Today, we celebrate our heroes," Norton said. "The aftermath of both hurricanes moved agency employees to go well beyond the call of duty as they worked to rescue people, deliver supplies and medicine, provide security, employ engineering skills and much, much more.

Service employees were among 125 workers from 14 Department of the Interior agencies honored. Secretary Norton said Interior employees left comfortable lives in exchange for long hours and big risks, performing "magnificently" under "the most trying circumstances." Norton said she was impressed by the employees' initiative, common sense and "get-it-done" attitude throughout the entire ordeal. "On behalf of President Bush," she said, "we salute you."

The following teams were recognized by the Secretary:

New Orleans Search and Rescue Team

Jim Boggs, Darryl Clark, Glen Constant, Jack Culpepper, Andy Dolan, Cederic Dolittle, Robert Dubois, Bill Ferguson, John Forester, Katherine Francis, Debbie Fuller, Buddy Goatcher, Robert Greco, Catherine Grouchy, Patti Holland, Warren Lorentz, Ronny Paille, Mark Parr (R2 team representative), Kevin Roy, Phillip Siragusa, David Soileau, Angela Trahan, Pete Tuttle, William Vermillion (R2), David Walther, Russ Watson (team representative)

Mandalay Search & Rescue Team

Steve Alvarez, Mike Blessington, Mike Chouinard, Kevin Cobble, Jeff Denman, Janet Ertel, David Ford, Barret Fortier, Andrew Hammond, Greg Harper, Mike Hoff, Richard Lloyd, Ben Mense, Steve Reagan, Dexter Soileau, Jay Smith, Jason Staley, Jon Storey, Tighe Teets, Kevin Vaughn, Paul Yakupzack (team representative)

Incident Management Teams 1 & 2 (Hurricane Katrina)

Incident Management Team 1 (Hurricane Rita)

Donny Browning, Dave Brownlie, Tom Crews (team representative), Holly Cyprian, Beverly Derouin, Ray Farietti, Brian Hardison, Curtis Heaton (team representative), Mike Housh, Terri Jenkins, Jim Johnson, Pete Kubiak, Mike Legare, Tom MacKenzie, Howard Poitivent, Skippy Reeves, Jim Rothschild, Pam Rule, Carl Schwope, Bonnie Strawser, John Thornburg, Fred Wetzell (team representative), Chris Wilcox, Kelley Van Druten, Craig Cowie, William Foster, Roylene Gaul, Phil Spor, Linda Torgerson, Tom Valuzzi (U.S. Forest Service), Tom Dunn (City of Reno, NV), Danny Maddox, Frank Sorrells (State of GA)

Merritt Island, Okefenokee, South Florida, Savannah Team

Wes Allie, Robert "Greg" Askins, Daniel Barrand, Jack Bentley, Cory Bryant, Rocky Chessner, Ginger Corbin, Jamie Farmer, Greg Geathers, Mike Good, Charles Johnson, Russ Langford, Don Napier, Doug Nuss, Josh O'Conner, Fed Privett, Robert Rahn, Willie Colon Rios, Paul Ryan, Vic

Scott, Paul (PJ) Stevko, Glen Stratton (team representative), Kelley Stratton, Dennis Williams, Danny Jack Willis, Darryl Woodard

Special Operations and Response Team/Law Enforcement Officers

Chris Allen, Larry Anderson, Greg Blanks, Eddie Brannon, Claude Carnathan, Bobby Gentry, Jerry Griggs, Rick Huffines (team representative), Jared Klein, Tommy Payne, Ray Porter, Jason Vehrs, Stacey Welch